

THE

PHILA. SATURDAY EVENING POST

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## THE ELEVENTH HOUR.

Faint, and worn, and aged,  
One stands knocking at a gate;  
Though no light shines in the casement,  
Knocking though so late.  
It has struck eleven  
In the courts of heaven,  
Yet he still doth knock and wait.

While no answer cometh  
From the heavenly hill,  
Blessed angels wend  
At his earnest will.  
Hope and fear but quicken  
While the shadows thicken:  
He is knocking, knocking still.

Grim the gate unopened  
Stands with bar and lock:  
Yet within the unseen Porter  
Hearkens to the knock.  
Doing and undoing,  
Faint and yet pursuing  
This man's feet are on the Rock.

With a cry unceasing,  
Knocketh, prayeth he:  
"Lord, have mercy on me  
When I cry to Thee."  
With a knock unceasing;  
And a cry increasing:  
"Oh, my Lord, remember me."

Still the Porter standeth,  
Love-constrained he standeth near,  
While the cry increaseth  
Of that love and fear;  
Jesus, look upon me—  
Christ, hast Thou foregone me?  
If I must, I perish here."

Faint the knocking ceases,  
Faint the cry and call:  
Is he lost indeed forever,  
But without the wall?  
Mighty Arms surround him,  
Arms that sought and found him,  
Held without, and bore through all.

Oh celestial mansion,  
Open wide the door:  
Crown and robes of whiteness,  
Stone inscribed before,  
Flocking angels bear them:  
Stretch thy hand and wear them;  
Sit thou down for evermore.

CHRISTINA G. ROSETTI.

## A RACE WITH THE SEA.

### CHAPTER I.

Kenrick, a pupil at St. Winifred's, as usual, was walking along the top of the cliffs alone—restless, aimless, and miserable—"mooning," as the boys would have called it—unable even to analyze his own thoughts, conscious only that it was folly in him to nurse this long-continued and hopeless melancholy, yet quite incapable of making the one strong effort which would have enabled him to throw it off. And in this mood he sat down near the cliff, thinking of nothing, but watching, with idle guesses as to their destination and history, the few vessels that passed by on the horizon. The evening was drawing in, cold and windy; and suddenly remembering that he must be back by tea-time, he rose up to return. The motion displaced his straw hat, and the next moment the breeze had carried it a little way over the edge of the cliff, where it was caught in a low bush of tamarisk. It rested but a few feet below him, and the chalky front of the cliff was sufficiently rough to admit of his descent. He climbed to it, and had just succeeded in disengaging it with his foot, when, before he had time to seize it, it again fell, and rolled down some thirty feet. Kenrick, finding that he had been able to get down with tolerable ease, determined to continue his descent in order to secure it. It never occurred to him that the hat was of no great importance, and that it would have been infinitely less trouble to walk home without it, and buy a new one, than to run the risk and encounter the trouble of his climb. However, he did manage to reach it, and put it on with some satisfaction; when, as he was beginning to remount, a considerable mass of chalk crumbled away under his feet, and made him cling on with both hands to avoid being precipitated. He had been able to get down well enough, because, if the chalk slipped, he glided on safely with it, but in climbing up he was obliged to press his feet strongly downwards in order to gain his spring; and every time he did this he found that the chalk kept giving way, exhausting him with futile efforts, filling his shoes with dust and pebbles, slipping into his clothes, and blinding his eyes. Every person who has climbed at all, whether in the Alps or elsewhere, knows that it is easy enough to get down places which it is almost impossible to mount again; and Kenrick, after many attempts, found that he had been most imprudent, and becoming seriously alarmed, forced, when he had quite tired himself with fruitless exertions, and had once or twice nearly fallen, to give up the attempt altogether, and do his best to secure another way of escape.

This was to climb down quite to the bottom of the cliff, and make his way, as best he could,



JAPANESE MODE OF DINING.

Our illustration represents a Japanese dinner-party kneeling at their little tables, one of which is set before each guest, and helping themselves, by the use of a pair of chopsticks, to such frag-

ments of meat as they can fish up out of their soup-basins. One gentleman, having done with his chopsticks, is raising the basin to his mouth that he may drink its liquid contents. The lady

at the head of the table, with characteristic politeness, refrains from eating till her visitors are served. An American would not enjoy a dinner much, if he had to eat on his knees.

There was yet one thing, and one thing only, to be tried, and it was truly the refuge of desperation. Kenrick was an excellent swimmer; many a time in bathing at St. Winifred's, even when he was a little boy, he had struck out boldly far into the bay, even as far as the huge tumbling red buoy, that spent its restless life in "ever climbing with the climbing wave." If he could swim for pleasure, could he not swim for safety? It was true that the swim before him was, beyond all comparison, farther and more hazardous than he had ever dreamt of. But swimming is an art which inspires extraordinary confidence; it makes us fancy that drowning is impossible to us, because we cannot imagine ourselves so fatigued as to fail in keeping above water. Kenrick knew that the attempt was only one to be undertaken at dire extremity; but that extremity had now arrived, and it was literally the last chance that lay between him and—what he would not think of yet.

So, in the wintry air, with the strong wind blowing keenly, and the red gleam of sunset already beginning to fail, he flung off his clothes on the damp beach, and as one who rushes on a forlorn hope in the teeth of an enemy, he ran down the rough, uneven shore, hardly noticing how much it hurt his feet, and plunged boldly into the hideous yeast of seething waves. The cold made him shiver and shiver in every limb; his teeth chattered; he was afraid of cramp; the slimy seaweeds that his feet touched, the tangled and rotting strings of sea-twine that waved about his legs, sent a strong shudder through him; and there was a sick, clammy feeling about the frothy sputume through which he had to plunge. But when he had once ploughed his way through all this, and was fairly out of his depth, the exercise warmed him, and he rose with a swimmer's triumphant motion over the yielding waves. On and on he swam, thinking only of that, not looking before him; but when he began to feel quite tired, and did look, he saw that he was not nearly half way to the headland. He saw, too, how the breakers were lashing and fighting with the iron shore which he was madly striving to reach. Even if he could swim so far—and he now felt that he could not—how could he ever land at such a spot? Would not one of those billows toss him up on its playful spray, and dash him, as it dashed its own unpitied offspring, dead upon the rocks? And as this conviction dawned on him, withering all his energy of heart, the wind wailed over him, the water bubbled in his ears, and the sea-mew, flapping as it flew past him, uttered above his head its plaintive scream. His heart sank within him. With a quick motion he turned in the water, and with arms wearied out he swam back again, as for dear life, towards the little landing-place, which alone divided him from instant death; struggling on heavily, with limbs so weary that he could barely move them through the waves, whose increasing swell often broke around his head. Already the tide had reached the spot where he had let his straw hat drop on the beach; the sea was scowling playfully with it, tossing it up and down, whirling it

round and round like a feather; the wind blew it to the sea, and the sea, receiving no gift from an enemy, flung it back again; but the wind carried the day, and while Kenrick was wringing the brine out of his dripping hair, and paddling his clothes again over his wet, numbed, and aching limbs, he saw the straw hat fairly launched, and floating away over the waves.

And then it was that, at the vision of sudden death glared out before his eyes, and the hoover of it leapt upon him, that a scream—loud, wild, echoing scream, which sounded strange in that lonely place, and rose above the rude song that the wind was now singing—broke from his blanched lips. And another, and another, and then silence; for Kenrick was now crouching at the cliff's foot furthest off from the swelling flood, with his eyes fixed motionless in a wild stare on its advancing line of foam. He was conjuring up before his imagination the time when those waves should have reached him; should have swept him away from the shelter of the shore, or risen above his lips; should have forced him again to struggle and swim, until his strength—already impaired by hunger, and thirst, and cold, and fatigue—should have failed him altogether, and he would sink, and the water gurgle wildly in his ears, and stop his breath—and all would be still. And when he had pictured this scene to himself with a vividness which made him experience all its agony, for a time his mind flew back through all the painful past up to that very day: Memory lighted her lantern, and threw its blaze on every dark corner, on every hidden recess, every forgotten nook—lost no spot unsearched, illuminated with sudden flash; all his past sins were before him—words, looks, thoughts, everything. As when a man descends, with a light in his diving-bell, into the heaving sea, the strange monsters of the deep, attracted by the unknown glimmer, throng and wallow terribly around him, so did unceaseth thoughts and forgotten sins wile in fearful multitudes round this light of memory in the deep sea of that poor human soul. And finally, as though in demon voices, came this message whispered to him, shouted to him tauntingly, rising and falling with maddening alternation on the rising and falling of the wind—"You have been wasting your life, moodily abandoning yourself to idle misery, neglecting your duties, letting your talents rust; God will take from you the life you know not how to use." And then, as though in answer to this, another voice, low, soft, sweet, that his heart knew well—another voice, filling the interspaces of the others with unseen music, whispered to him soothingly—"It shall be given you again; use it better; use it better; awake, use it better; it shall be given you again."

Those three wild shrieks of Kenrick's had been heard; he did not know it, but they had been heard. The whole coast was in general so lonely that you could usually pace it for miles without meeting a single human being, and it never even occurred to him that some one might pass that way. But it so happened that the boisterous weather of the last few days had cast away a schooner at a place some five miles from St. Winifred's, and Walter Evans had walked with Charlie to see the wreck, and was returning along the cliff. As they passed the spot where Kenrick was, they had been first startled and then horrified by those shrieks, and while they stood listening another came to their ears, more piercing, more heart-rending than the rest. "Good Heavens! there must be some one down there!" exclaimed Walter.

"Why, how could any one have got there?" asked Charlie.

"Well, but didn't you hear some one scream?"

"Yes, several times. Oh, Walter, do look here!" Charlie pointed to the traces on the cliff that some one had descended there.

"Who could have wanted to get down there?"

"Do you see any one, Walter?"

"No, I don't; there's nothing but the sea."

For Kenrick, crouching under the cliff, was hidden from sight, and now the tide had come up so far that, from the summit, none of the shingle was visible. "But what's that?"

"Why, Walter, it's a straw hat; it must be one of our fellows down there; I see the ribbon distinctly—dark blue and white twisted together."

"Dark blue and white? why, then, it must be some one in the foot-ball eleven: Charlie, it must be Kenrick! Heavens! what can have happened?"

"Kenrick?" they both shouted at the top of their voices. But the cliff was high, and the wind, momentarily rising to a blast, swept away their shouts, and although Kenrick might have heard them distinctly under ordinary circumstances, they now only mingled with, and gave new form and body to, the wild madness which terror was beginning to kindle in his brain. So they shouted, and no answer came.

"No answer comes, Charlie; but there's some one down there as sure as we are here," said Walter. Charlie had already begun to try and descend the face of the cliff. "Stop, stop, Charlie!" said Walter, seizing him and dragging him up again, "you mustn't try that—nay, Charlie, you really must not. If it's possible, I will." He tried, but three minutes showed him that, however practicable a descent might be, an ascent afterwards would be wholly beyond his power. Besides, if he did descend, what

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could he do? Clutching nothing; and, with another plan in view, he with difficulty reached his former position.

"Nothing to be done that way, Charlie." At that moment another cry came, for Kenrick, in a temporary lull of the wind, had fancied that he had heard sounds and voices other than those of his tortured and agonized fancy. "Has I you heard that?" said Walter; and he shouted again, but no sound was returned.

"We must fly to St. Winifred's, Charlie; there's a bay down on the shore beyond a doubt. You stay behind if you like, for you can't run as fast as me. I'm afraid, though, it's not the least good. St. Winifred's is three miles from here, and long before I've got help and come three miles back, it's clear that no one can be alive down there; still we must try." And he was starting when Charlie seized him.

"Don't you remember, Walter, the hut at Bryne's cove? There's an old boat there, and it's a mile and a half nearer than St. Win's."

"Capital boy, Charlie!" said Walter; "how good of you to think of it—it's the very thing, Charlie."

They flew along at full speed, Walter taking Charlie's hand, and saying,

"Never mind stretching your legs for once, even if you are tired. How well you run! we shall be there in no time."

They gained the cove, flew down the steep narrow path, and reached the hut door. Their summons was only answered by the furious barking of a dog. No one was in.

"Never mind, there's the boat; we must take French leave." And Walter, springing down, hastily unhooked it.

"Wah! what a horrid old tub, and it wants balling, Walter."

"We can't stay for that, Charlie boy; it's a good thing that Semlyn Lake has taught us both to row, isn't it?"

"Oh, yes; don't you wish we had the little 'Pearl' here now, Walter? Wouldn't we make it fly, instead of this cranky old wretch?"

"Well, we must fancy that this is the 'Pearl,' and this Semlyn Lake," said Walter, wading up to the knees to launch the boat, and springing in when he had given it the final shove.

They were excellent rowers, but Charlie had never tried his skill in a sea like that, and was timid, for which there was every excuse.

"How very rough it is, Walter," he said, as the boat tossed up and down like an egg-shell on the high waves.

"Keep up your heart, Charlie, and row steadily; don't be afraid."

"No, Walter, I won't, as you're with me; but—Walter!"

"Well?"

"It'll be dark in half an hour."

"Not quite, and we shall be there by that time; we needn't go far out, and the tide's with us." So the two brave brothers rowed steadily on, with only more remark from Charlie, ushered in by the word—

"Walter?"

"Anything more to frighten me with, Charlie?" he answered, cheerily: "you shan't succeed,"

"Well, Walter," he answered, with a little touch of shame, "I was only going to say that if you look, you'll see that your oar's been broken, and is only spliced together."

"I've seen it all along, Charlie, and will use the oar gingerly; and now, Charlie, I see you're a little frightened, my boy. I'm going to brace you up. Rest on your oar a minute."

He did so.

"Now turn round and look."

He pointed with his finger to a dark figure, now distinctly seen, cowering low at the white cliff's foot.

"Oh, Walter, I'm ready! I won't say a word more." And he leant to his oar and plied it like a man.

It is a pretty, a delightful thing, in idle summer-time, to lie at full length upon the beach on some ambrosial summer evening, when a glow floats over the water, whose calm surface is tenderly rippled with gold and blue. And while the children play beside you, dabbiling and paddling in the wavelets, and digging up the ridges of yellow sand, which take the print of their patterning footsteps, nothing is more pleasant than to let the transparent stream of the quiet tide wash musically with its light and motion to your very feet; nothing more pleasant than to listen to its silken murmur, and to watch it flow upwards with its beneficent coolness, and take possession of the shore. But it is a very different thing when there rises behind you a wall of frowning cliff, precipitous, inaccessible, affording no hope of refuge; and when, for the golden glow of summer eve, you have the cheerless drawing in of a loud and stormy February night; and when you have the furious hissing violence of rock-and-wind-struck breakers for the violet-colored margin of rippling waves—knowing that the wind is wailing for your requiem, and that, with the fall of every breaker, unseen hands are ringing your knell of death.

The boy crouched there, his face white as the cliffs above him, his undried limbs almost powerless for cold, and his clothes wetted through and through with spray—pushing aside every moment the dripping locks of hair which the wind scattered over his forehead, that he might look with hollow, staring eyes on the Death which was advancing towards him, wrapping him already in its huge mantle-folds, calling aloud to him, beckoning him, freezing him, freezing to the very bone with the touch of its icy hand.

And the brutal tide coming on, according to the pitiless, irreversible certainty of the fixed laws that governed it—coming on like a huge, swallowing monster, dumb and blind—knew not, and recked not, of the young life that quivered on the verge of its advance—that it was about to devour remorselessly, with no wrath to satiate, with no hunger to appease. None the less for the boy's presence, unregarded of his growing horror and wild suspense, it continued its uncouth play—leaping about the rocks, springing upwards and stretching high hand to pluck down the cliffs; seeming to laugh as it fell back shattered and exhausted, but unabated; charging up sometimes like a herd of wild, white horses, bounding one over the other, shaking their foamy manes; hissing sometimes like a brood of huge sea-serpents, as it inundated its winding streams among the boulders of the shore.

It might have seemed to be in sport with him as it ran first up to his feet, and playfully splashed him—as a batter might splash a person on the shore from head to heel—and then ran back again for a moment, and then up again a little farther, till, as he sat on the extreme line of the shore, and with his back huddled up close against the cliff; it first wetted the soles of his feet, and then was over his

shoes, then sank deep, then knew-deep, then to the waist. Already it seemed to bury him up; he knew that in a few moments more he would be forced to swim, and the last struggle would commence.

His brain was dull, his senses blunted, his mind half-idiotic, when first (for his eyes had been fixed downwards on the growing, mounting waters) he caught a glimpse, in the failing daylight, of the black outline of a boat, not twenty yards from him, and caught the sound of its plashing oars. He stared eagerly at it, and just as it came beside him he lost all his strength, uttered a faint cry, and slipped down fainting into the waves.

## CHAPTER II. ON THE DARK SEA.

**Boys**  
Leaning upon their oars, with splash and strain,  
Made white with foam the green and purple sea.  
—*Euripiades*.

In a moment Walter's strong arms had caught him, and lifted him tenderly into the boat. While the waves tossed them up and down, they placed him at full length as comfortably as they could—which was not very comfortable—and though his clothes were streaming with salt water, and his fainting fit still continued, they began at once to row home. For by this time it was dim twilight; the wind was blowing great guns, the clouds were full of dark wrath, and the stormy billows rose higher and higher. There was no time to spare, and it would be as much as they could do to provide for their own safety. The tide was already bumping them against the cliff at the place where, just in time, they had rescued Kenrick; and in order to get themselves fairly off, Walter, forgetting for a moment, pushed out his oar and pressed against the cliff. The damaged oar was weak enough already, and instantly Walter saw that his vigorous stroke had weakened and displaced the old splicing of the blade. Charlie, too, observed it, but neither of them spoke a word; on the contrary, the little boy was at his place, oar in rudder, and immediately smote lightly and in good time the surface of the water, splashed it into white foam, and pulled with gallant strokes.

They made but little way; the waves pitched them so high, and dropped them with such a heavy fall between their rolling troughs, that rowing became almost impossible, and the miserable old boat shipped quantities of water. At last, after a stronger pull than usual, Walter's oar creaked, snapped, and gave way, flinging him on his back. The loosened twin with which it had been spliced was half rotten with age; it broke in several places, the oar-blade fell off and floated away, and Walter was left holding in both hands a broken and futile stump.

"Look up, Charlie; you see that light?"

"Yes; what is it?"

"Sharkskin Lighthouse; don't you remember seeing it sometimes at night from St. Win's?"

"Yes; and those lights twinkling far off are St. Win's. Those must be the school lights; and those long windows you can just see are the chapel windows. They are in chapel now, or the lights wouldn't be there. Perhaps some of our friends—Power, perhaps, and Eden—are praying for us; they must have missed us since tea-time."

"How I wish we were with them!"

"Perhaps we may be again; and all the wiser and better in heart and life for this solemn time, Charlie. If we are but carried by this wind and current within hearing of the light-house!"

The Sharkskin Lighthouse is built on a sharp high rock two miles out at sea. I have watched it from Bleak Point on a bright, warm summer's day, when the promontory around me was all ablaze with purple heather and golden gorse, and there was not breeze enough to shake the wing of the butterfly as it rested on the blue-bliss, or disturbed the honey-laden bee as it murmured in the thyme. Yet even then the waters were seething and boiling in never-ending tumult about those hideous sunken rocks; and the ocean all around was hoary as with the neezings of a thousand leviathans sounding in its monstrous depths. You may guess what they are on a wild February night; how, in the mighty rush of the Atlantic, the torn breakers beat about them with tremendous rage, till the whole sea is in angry motion like some demon caldron that seethes over roaring flame.

Dripping along, or rather flung and battered about on the current, they passed within near sight of the lighthouse and they might have thanked God that they passed no nearer, for who had passed nearer would have been certain death. The white waves dashed over it, enveloped its tall strong pillar that buffered them back, like a noble will in the midst of calamity and persecution; they fell back hissing and dismasted, and could not dip its silver or quench its flame; but it glowed on with steady lustre in the midst of them—flung its victorious path of splendor over their raging motion, warned from the sunken reef the weary mariner, and looked forth untroubled with its broad, calm eye into the madness and fury of the tempest-haunted death.

Then you have saved me at the risk, perhaps, at the cost of your own lives. Oh, you noble, noble Walter!" said Kenrick, the tears gushing from his eyes. "How awfully terrible this is! I seem to be snatched from death to death. Life and death are battling for me to-night; yes, eternal life and death too," he whispered in Walter's ear, catching him by the wrist. "All this danger is for me, Walter, and for my sin. I am like Jonah in the ship; I have been buffeted death away for hours, but he has sent me for you, he must do his mission. I see that I cannot escape; but, oh God, I hope that you will escape, Walter. Your life and Charlie's must not be split for mine."

"It would be of no use, Ken," said Walter; "I mean that we can't row," and he pointed to the broken oar.

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"All this danger is for me, Walter, and for my sin. I am like Jonah in the ship; I have been buffeted death away for hours, but he has sent me for you, he must do his mission. I see that I cannot escape; but, oh God, I hope that you will escape, Walter. Your life and Charlie's must not be split for mine."

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"It would be of no use, Ken,"

## THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

3.

## A New Life.

FOR THE SATURDAY EVENING POST.

BROOKVILLE, Aug. 24th, 1864.

Dear Editor.—Having a few moments to myself, I will indite a few lines to you. I believe in my last I told you we were on the eve of our picnic.

To-day our anticipated pleasure was realized. The sun rose majestically, dispersing the mist before him, and soon were seen coming from all directions, groups of girls in their pure white robes, and the "bunch o' blue ribbons," with graceful streamers adorning heads which needed no decoration, to attract the eye of a lover of the beautiful.

Scattered among them could be seen a stray black coat, or a more refreshing sight in warm weather, a linen duster, still bearing the creases of the iron.

I should not say a more refreshing sight, for it is truly refreshing to see one clothed in the habiliments pertaining to the sterner sex, in Brookville.

It is a patriotic little village, and has sent forth nearly all the fathers, husbands, sons, brothers, lovers and friends that were able to go. I have happened into it, in a time of rejoicing, as a number having homes here have returned for a month's furlough, on account of their re-enlistment.

I have been waiting at the window, some time, for my friend Sophronia, and as I have looked out upon the earth in all its beauty, felt the rays of the sun which shines impartially over all, and my brow been fanned by the breeze of the early morning, I cannot but look past the creation to the Creator, and exclaim with the Psalmist, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?"

We grasp the bounties so freely given to us, and often, instead of feeling grateful, murmur, because we have not received a larger supply.

Here passing before me are those in the invigorating morning of life, endowed with health, friends, and some with what is commonly termed wealth—their sparkling eyes, glowing cheeks, brisk step, and the gay laughter, escaping past the ivy sentinels, and dancing faun between the rosy lips, bubbling up from a heart overflowing with happiness, as the water from a spring, are indicative of their enjoyment. But how many among them have directed a thought to the "Giver of all Good?" We rise in the morning and lie down at night, partake of all the blessings bestowed upon us, and live as if we were not serving out a probation, the full fulfillment of which will determine our future happiness or misery—but rather as if this earth had been given to us for our heritage, the pleasures of which we are to enjoy through eternity—but—

"The world's all title-page; there's no contents; The world's all face; the man who shows his heart Is hooted for his nudities and scorned."

So, as I hear my friend descending the stairs, I draw a veil over my thoughts and feelings, and assume the coldness and formality which are only recognized by the world, and go forth to meet those already assembled.

We are soon seated on the straw in the large wagon in waiting at the village academy, and mirth and songs abound as we drive to the woods, a couple of miles distant.

Arrived at the place of our destination, we started in quest of a suitable spot for a kitchen and dining-room, which being fixed upon, the tables and benches were put up, and material gathered for a fire. We sat on the sod and chatted until a proposition was made that we should engage in some sport, when some joined in a play, others strolled about in groups, while here and there might be seen one in a secluded nook, enjoying a favorite author.

The sun had nearly gained the zenith, when the horn was blown, and all met to assist in getting dinner.

Baskets were opened, and soon the tables were loaded with custards, cakes, fowls, jellies, pickles, &c. Meanwhile a fire had been kindled, and the boiling coffee diffused its fragrance among us—we feasted, and then came the clearing up of the fragments and washing dishes, in which culinary department the gentlemen seemed to vie with the ladies in skill.

The afternoon passed off in nearly the same manner as the morning, until towards evening, when it was proposed by some that all should join in the old-fashioned game of Copenhagen.

A rope was procured, and with the exception of a few others and myself all had taken hold—we were obliged to relent, and grasp the rope, or spoil the enjoyment, as it was declared that all must play or none.

Running, screaming, struggling and giggling took the place of the quiet and refined mirth that had prevailed all day, and to increase the excitement several were placed in the ring at once, which made it almost impossible to remain a spectator, thus bent on every side.

Sophronia had taken quite a prominent part in the games of the day, but now she became more conspicuous than ever. She had formed quite an attachment for a young physician who was visiting at the squire's, she confidentially told me, and that the feeling was reciprocated. She enjoyed the conversation of those around her, so much, that she was surprised frequently, and brought into the circle, amid whispers of "vinegar, pickles, age improves wine," &c., and each time she made her way smiling, directly to the Doctor, tapped his knuckles gently with her fan and meekly awaited the touch of his lips, but, suddenly we hear an unusual clamor, a rush is made, and all eyes are drawn to the retreating form of the Doctor, closely followed by Sophronia—he doubles upon his track, dodges behind trees, while cheers, shouts and clapping make the woods ring.

The fair lady had unknowingly dropped her head-dress to which her curls are attached—the chase continues—growing deeply and more deeply interesting, now she has just grasped the skirt of his duster, when she catches her foot on a root and falls to the ground; recalling to my mind a part of Woolsey's *Soliiloquy*, after his downfall:

"And, when he thinks, good easy man, full surely His greatness is a ripening,—nips his root, And then he falls, as I do."

The pursued turns and raises the pursuer to her feet, seeks and adjusts her head-arrangement, and then in order to heal all bruises, presses a half-dozen kisses on her cheek, declaring she had earned them, and more too.

She indignantly refuses his proffered assistance, and walks with head erect and flashing eyes past us, and starts homeward. The Doctor hastened after her, and insisted upon her return-

ing, or at least waiting until he could bring a wagon, which offer she treated with disdain.

Our party now began to make preparations for a homeward ride, feeling that any more amusement was out of the question for that day.

I really pitied the Doctor, whose inordinate love of mischief had led him to forget that a gentleman would not have acted in such a manner. We drove home in a much graver humor than had been our state in the morning.

I was almost afraid to venture into the presence of the injured lady, who had been made the recipient of the jokes of the fun-loving, but now crest-fallen Doctor, and was considerably relieved when all the party declared their intention of sharpening my home.

We could not obtain admittance front, and retreated to the back, but found that port also closed against us,—so I am compelled to stay with some of my new friends until morning, when the Doctor proposes to escort me, and sue for pardon for his offence.

I excused myself, on the plea of a headache, from joining the family party this evening, but after an hour's rest, felt so refreshed, I could not refrain from indulging in a chat with you.

Yours most respectfully, G. M.

## An Annuity.

The following is one of the experiences of a retired London bill-broker, who must have had some more profitable business than the case described to retire on:—"I had been," he says, "about five years in Lombard street, and had just admitted Mr. Pryce, my first partner in the firm of Lovegold & Co., when the greatest calamity of my life befel me, warning me never again to meddle with matters I did not understand. A customer of ours, one Mr. Reeves, introduced a maiden lady, Miss Hannah Leigh, aged fifty, as her baptismal certificate testified. This abominable woman was in possession of the sum of five thousand pounds, which she was desirous of sinking for a life annuity. Now, I never before or since saw a female whose attenuated face and frame more plainly betokened an early departure from this world. Her cough was positively distressing to hear; her legs were swollen with dropsy—so at least the two medical gentlemen we consulted declared; she had an affection of the liver, and had totally lost her appetite. One of the M.D.'s was of opinion she could not possibly live six months—the other gave her nine at the utmost. It seemed a promising, a very promising speculation, even upon the terms from which Hannah Leigh—confound her!—could not be persuaded to recede: namely, that for her five thousand pounds we should guarantee her one thousand per annum during life. In an evil hour we sealed that bargain, and, horrible to say, Hannah Leigh is now, in 1868, alive, and apparently many years younger than she was in 1820! She came to our office in a Bath chair, was helped up stairs, and now—I met her last week—she walks with a firmer step than her; her cough, and the dropsy, and the liver complaint, which, not long after the annuity was signed, showed symptoms of gradual amendment, have totally disappeared for at least forty years! Forty-three thousand pounds has Hannah Leigh already drawn from Lovegold & Co., and it's my opinion will plunder that persecuted firm of at least twenty thousand more. The Register General, depend upon it, who shall have to record her death—if she ever dies, with respect to which I have at times strange doubts—will say that Hannah Leigh was one of the most remarkable instances of longevity upon record. We once, when the thing had become unbearable, tried if a Court of Equity could not afford us some relief, and got laughed at for our pains. One of the most solid sources of satisfaction offered by my retirement from business was that I should no longer see Hannah Leigh, precisely on the stroke of twelve every quarter day, call up that eternal two hundred and fifty pounds cheque.

## A POSY OF QUESTIONS.

What wisdom more, what better life, than pleases God to send?  
What worldly goods, what longer use, than pleases God to lend?  
What better fare than well content, agreeing with thy wealth?  
What better guest than trusty friend, in sickness and in health?  
What better bed than conscience good, to pass the night with sleep?  
What better work than daily care from sin thyself to keep?  
What better thought than think on God, and daily Him to serve?  
What better gift than to the poor, that ready be to starve?  
What greater praise of God and man than mercy to show for? Who, merciles, shall mercy find, that mercy shows to few?  
What worse despair than loath to die, for fear to go to hell?  
What greater faith than trust in God, through Christ in Heaven to dwell?

THOMAS TUNSER, 1557.

**33** Juliet talked of Romeo's being cut up into stars. It would be well for a good many young women if their lovers were chopped up much finer than that.

**33** We are not apt to think that one of the great causes of the sadness of autumn is its silence—the absence of the birds. It is like the wilderness, whose characteristic is also silence—the absence of man: a much deeper silence reaching away back to the creation. Night also has its silence. But the greatest silence is that of the grave.

**33** It takes a little over \$200 in greenbacks to purchase \$100 in gold. In Richmond, it is said, \$20 in Confederate scrip is readily given for one of ours. At that rate it would take \$3,200 of "Confed" to purchase \$100 in gold.

**33** A correspondent of the Bath Times gravely asserts that there are "young ladies" in Maine who write to soldiers unknown to them except by name, and when the soldiers reply and enclose stamp, put the stamp in their pocket and write no more. Think of it—young ladies cheating soldiers out of three-cent stamps!

**33** An Hibernian was reproved by an officer for daring to whist in the ranks while going on duty. Just as the officer spoke, one of the enemy's balls came whistling over the ravine. Pat cocked his eye up towards it, and quietly said: "There goes a boy on his duty, and, be janders, how he whistles!"

**33** People have little gratitude to those who speak the strict truth of them. The bald wife of Helenus gave six hundred pounds to a poet who extolled the beauty and profusion of her hair.

## How I Got on at the Wedding.

## A SCENE IN CHINA.

The subject of Chinese marriages is one which I have long intended to write about; but the ceremonies and customs attending them are so numerous that it is impossible to enumerate them all. However, I will now introduce you to a marriage scene in which I lately participated, and it will serve as a type of the ordinary marriage ceremonies among the middle class of Cantonese. Two of the chief actors in this scene are particular friends of mine. Can you picture them sitting by a teapot, smoking and drinking tea? One with a fan in his hand is my comrade, and a very polite individual he is; the other is his younger brother, my chin-chang, or teacher. He has a cup of tea in his hand, and is in the act of scraping the floating leaves and stalks from the side of his cup: this he does with the earthenware lid or cover of the cup. A water tobacco-pipe is on the table, made of brass. A little tobacco is put in the short upright tube, and the smoke is drawn through the water in the expansion below. An inexperienced smoker is apt to draw the water into his mouth as well as the smoke. The pipe is usually filled, held, and the light applied by an attendant boy, who keeps the mouth-piece within a few inches of his master's mouth, popping it in for him whenever a cessation in the conversation permits him to take a puff. A vase of artificial flowers is also on the table. The furniture is characteristic, is very linear, and very uncomfortable according to English notions. There is a straight heavy chair on each side of a small table or teapot, equally square and straight. Every Chinese reception-room is thus furnished. There are chair, teapot, chair, tea-set, teapot, chair, all round the room. A diao at the end is the only additional article required, and none of these are supposed to be moved from their place.

Well, these two brothers are the worthy gentlemen of whom I have to tell you. The elder is Mr. Fan-fat, and the other is Fung-wing. Their father is dead. Fung is the surname, which, in that common confraternity of Chinese habits, is always placed first. Fat, the elder brother, is married, and rejoices in a son and heir, who sometimes condescends to allow me to carry him in my arms without crying, and calls me Mr. Chin-chin. Fat has also a baby daughter; but children of that sex are not counted by the Chinese.

It chanced that Fat one day, while ruminating on the fortunes of the family, and lamenting, probably, the ill luck (as they deem it) which attended the sex of his second child, brought him that his younger brother, Wing, ought to marry. Accordingly, probably (but not of necessity,) first acquainting Wing with this happy idea which had struck him so suddenly, he set to work to find a suitable lady to present as a bride to his younger brother. In negotiating these matters it is customary to employ middlemen (or women,) who act forth the attractions of the several eligible marriageable ladies who come within their mediatory influence, or, in other words, whose mammas and papas have commissioned them (the middlemen) to seek for suitable husbands for their daughters.

The selection being made (by Fat, of course,) Wing was then informed of the state of affairs, and was directed to make necessary preparations. He, however, had some objections to marrying; thought himself too young, had no means of supporting a family, and so on, all of which objections were overruled by the elder brother, Fat; and finally Wing, as in duty bound, gave respectful obedience to the dictates of Fat acting *in loco parentis*.

The middlemen were now paid for their services, and the elder brother negotiated matters of detail directly with the parents of the bride-elect.

The day appointed for the wedding approached. Presents were constantly interchanged. Furniture and decorations were being bought or hired for the occasion. All were bustle and excitement. Invitations were sent round; complimentary cards and letters and calls were received.

The day arrived. Fat's house was decorated with gilt and tinsel. Huge scrolls, on which were inscribed quotations from the classics, or other works, and which had been presented by the invited guests, adorned the walls. Small orange-trees were introduced into the grand hall, and paper dragons, and nondescript animals of the same material, vied with each other in hideous ugliness. In the meantime a procession went along the streets. Half a dozen ragged boys, with faded red cloaks making scarce any pretensions to cover the rags, and none to cover the bare legs, led the way with timbrels and fife. Gilded stages, borne on men's shoulders by means of poles, and containing ornaments, fruits, cakes, sweetmeats, etc.; more ragged boys with music and flags; still more boys, gorgeously dressed, the rags more effectually concealed; red and gilt, noise and clatter, rags and faded finery (hired for the occasion) pass along the streets. This is the marriage procession. A huge sedan chair, one mass of gilded carving, brings up the rear. In this the bride is seated. She is conveyed from her father's house, and carried blindfolded to that of her future husband, attended by none of her own kindred save the youngest male adult member of the family.

The procession halts, commingles with the crowd of sight-seers, and, amidst no small confusion, hubbub and noise, the bride alights from her sedan, enters the house, and, for the first time in her life, beholds her future husband. Her younger brother, who brought her, leaves immediately, and, except an old servant or two he left with her, the bride is left alone in the midst of strangers, and is at once conducted to her bed-room, arrayed in bridal costume. In the meanwhile the guests have arrived. They, of course, are all of the sterner sex; nevertheless, etiquette requires them to visit the bride in her own room, when they make any remark they choose as to her personal appearance. "What beautiful feet she has! what superb teeth! what exquisite eyes!" And, while these remarks are being made, she stands bowing to her guests, raising her folded hands to her head, her arms supported by a female servant on either side. All day long guests come and go, and the poor bride must be very tired before evening comes, to put an end to her laborious duty.

For my part, I had made up my mind to go through this part of the proceeding in person, though I did not like the idea. You know what an awkward, bashful fellow I am in the company of ladies. However, I determined to go. I learned beforehand that a cup of tea would be handed to me, and I diligently practiced the right pronunciation of a few complimentary words, which I would, I knew, be very rude of me to omit before drinking the tea. It was evening. I screwed up my courage, repeated my

complimentary phrase to myself, and boldly entered the small bed-room, in company with several Chinese, who, come to have another look at the bride, and come to witness my awkwardness, crowded round me and filled the doorway.

The bride arose and commenced bowing to me. Being a very nervous man, this was rather a formidable attack. What could I do? I made a bow, and then looked to Fat for help. "Oh, Fat," said I, "do tell her to sit down—tell her not to bow to me. Say something very pretty and polite to her, and say it is from me."

Fat smiled reproachfully, raised his voice, and addressed the fair bride. I could not have spoken a word of Chinese at the moment, I was so confused.

It was a close, warm evening. The room was very small, very crowded, very hot.

I began to feel faint. Then I heard Fat's voice above the din of the crowd. He had "a polite speech to make in my name." Then I heard him say in Chinese, every word of which I understood, "Here is the honorable foreigner—come to see you. He is a great and important man: bow to him; knock your head on the ground to him" (imagine my horror when she prostrated herself before me). "Show the foreign gentleman your small feet" (she did so, to my dismay). Then, addressing himself to me, Fat said, "There, look at her face: don't you think it is pretty? It's too dark; bring a candle;" and, holding a dirty candle to her countenance, he dragged me to take a closer inspection. Then the ceremonial cup of tea was handed to me; but, instead of uttering my prettily prepared compliment, I gulped it down and asked for more.

All this time the guests, some thirty in number, are eating and drinking in the great hall. Dishes are constantly being changed, and all feast heartily. The utmost good feeling seems to prevail; all are courteous and polite to each other; there is a sufficiency of ceremony to preserve decorum, and yet all is sufficiently informal to make all feel at home.

But where is the bridegroom, Mr. Wing, all this time? We left him at the door receiving his bride. After that he participates in none of the festivities, but walks about the festal hall, seeing that his guests are well served, bowing to the doorway every one who goes, and from the doorway every one who arrives. He, poor fellow, eats his plain every-day meal alone. He does not touch the viands the guests partake of; it would not be polite; and very tired he looks. Fat, too, has had a hard day's work. He has to bow and scrape to every guest, and help his younger brother to see that the neighboring cook-shop keeps the tables well supplied. Only he has this advantage over poor Wing, that he may help himself to the viands, and the wine gives him an artificial strength and a spurious sparkling of the eye, which his unfeasted brother lacks. Six boys at the doorway clatter their cymbals as each guest comes and goes, the constant din of which is anything but refreshing. By ten o'clock all have separated for their respective homes, and the Fung family retire to rest.

The next day the festivities are renewed; but instead of the gentlemen paying their visits to the bride's bed-room, she comes out when all are seated at the tables, and knocks her head on the ground to her husband's friends. They, unmercifully, pay little attention to this ceremony, but go on eating their nuts, or rather their dried melon-seeds, paying as much attention to the prostitute bride as you might to a dog looking up for a bone. As the son of my father, however, and a thoroughbred Englishman, I could not stand this—or rather, I could not sit. So I rose on my feet, and begged her to rise. The Chinese at my table followed my example, and intimated their lordly satisfaction at the homage paid, by saying to the bride, "You are polite, you are polite; that is etiquette: you may get up."

A third day's festivities, with some slight difference in the ceremonies, completed the wedding arrangements of Mr. Pun-wing. That the bride and bridegroom never see each other, and know, in fact, nothing whatever of each other until the wedding day, is the proper etiquette. But I believe they very commonly know much more, about the arrangements than they profess to do. And what do you think they have instead of bridecake? A roasted pig! It is cut up, and pieces are sent to the bride's parents and other friends, just as we distribute our much more palatable, though less digestible cake. But there is more measing in the pig: the non-receipt of it by the bride's parents causes them anxiety lest some great misfortune should befall their daughter.

The scene at the bride's parents for two or three days before the wedding, more resembles the preliminaries of a funeral. Everybody, especially the bride, is weeping; and if they cannot weep a sufficient quantity, hired weepers are engaged, who fill their houses with their lamentations, and perform their part so well that any one not knowing that they were only shamming with grief, would think their hearts were bursting with it. Tears flow from their eyes, and they sigh and groan most piteously. All this is supposed to represent the grief of the daughter at parting from her parents.

**33** A PIG IN THE FENCE.

Did you never observe, when a pig in the fence Sends forth his most pitiful shout,  
How all of his neighbors betake themselves hence  
To push him ere he gets out?  
What a hubub they raise, so that others afar  
May know his condition, and hence  
Come running to join them in adding a scar  
To the

## AN OLD POEM.

[The following verses were addressed by the celebrated Marquis of Huntress to his wife, when leaving her for his military duties in furtherance of the Royalist cause in Scotland.]

My love and only love, I pray  
That little world of thine,  
Be govern'd by no other sway,  
Than present Monarchy.  
For if confusion have a part,  
Which virtuous souls abhor,  
And call a curse in thy heart  
I'll never love thee more.

Like Alexander I will reign,  
And I will reign alone,  
My soul will evermore disdain,  
A rival in my throne.  
He either fears his fate too much,  
Or his deserts are small,  
Who dares not put it to the touch,  
To win or lose it all.

Then in the empire of thy heart,  
Where I alone would be,  
If others should pretend a part,  
Or dare to share with me,  
By love my peace shall ne'er be wreck'd,  
I'll spur him from my door,  
I'll smiting mock at thy regret,  
And never love thee more.

But if no faithless action stain  
Thy truth, and constant word,  
I'll make thee famous by my pen,  
And glorious by my sword.  
I'll serve thee in such noble ways,  
As ne'er were known before,  
I'll deck and crown thy head with bays,  
And love thee more and more.

## OSWALD CRAY.

BY MRS. HENRY WOOD,  
Author of "Verner's Pride," "The Shadow of Ask-  
lyatt," "Squire Trevlyn's Heir,"  
"The Mystery," etc., etc.

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1861,  
by Mrs. Henry Wood, in the Clerk's Office of the  
District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsyl-  
vania.]

## PART XXXVIII.

AN IRruption ON MARK CRAY.

If anything could exceed in extent the prosperity of the Great Wheal Bang Mine itself, it was the prosperity of those immediately connected with it. There was only one little drawback—ready money ran short. It had been short a long while, and the inconvenience was great in consequence; but the prolonged inconvenience was now approaching to a height that even that sanguine spirit, Barker, even Mark Cray in his confounding carelessness, felt that something must be done to remedy it.

Of course the cause of this will be readily divined—that the Great Wheal Bang's ore was not yet in the market. The heat of summer had passed, September was in with its soft air and its cool breezes, and still that valuable ore had not begun to realize. It was obstinate ore, and it persisted in giving the greatest possible trouble before it would come out of its mother earth, where it had been imbedded for ages and ages. Those who understood the matter best, and the process of working these mines, tedious at all times, did not consider that any time was being lost; and it is more than probable that the impatience of Barker and Mark Cray alone caused the delay to appear unduly long.

The money being swallowed up by that mine was enormous, and Mark Cray got half dismayed at odd moments. The shareholders were growing tired of the calls upon their pockets; but they were on the whole confiding shareholders, believing implicitly in the mine and its final results. As a natural sequence, the mine's wants being so great, its mouth so greedy a one, Mark Cray and his friend could have the last money to play with on their own score; but they managed to secure a little for absolute personal wants, and tradespeople of all denominations were eager to supply anything and everything to the great men of the Great Wheal Bang. How entire was the confidence placed in the mine by these two masters of it, may be seen from the fact of their depriving themselves of money to pour it into the ever-open chasm. They might so easily have diverted a little channel into their own pockets! It's true it might not have been quite the honest thing to do, but in these matters few men are scrupulous. Mark had surreptitiously sent a few shares into the market and realized the proceeds; but he had done it with reluctance; he did not care to part with his shares; neither was it well that the Great Wheal Bang's shares should be afloat.

Standing at the window of their drawing-room on the hasty September afternoon were Mark Cray and his wife. The fashionable world were of course not in London, but Mr. and Mrs. Cray formed an exception—there is no rule without one, you know. Mark felt that he could not be absent from those attractive offices in the city, even for a day: it was well that one of them should be seen there, and Barker was everlastingly running down into Wales.

"Never mind, Carine," he said to his wife. "We'll take it out next year: we'll have a three-months autumn trip in Germany. The money will be rolling in upon us then, and I need not stick here to keep the shareholders in good humor, as I have to do now."

Carine obediently acquiesced; and she did it with cheerfulness: she had not been sufficiently long in her new and luxurious home to care about leaving it.

But she solaced herself with all the gaiety that was obtainable within reach. Drives out of town by day; the theatre at night, or some other amusement accessible in September. On this day they had been to a wedding at the house of some new friends at Richmond: Mark went with her, and they had but now returned; if you look out you may see the fine carriage with its four gray horses only now turning from the door, for Caroline, capricious Caroline, wayward and whimsical as a child, had stepped out of it undecided whether to go out again and drive in the park before dinner; and she kept the carriage waiting until she was pleased to decide not to go.

"I am a little tired, Mark, and they'd be over so long taking out those post-horses, and putting in our own," she said to her husband. "We could never go in the Park with four horses and postboys wearing white favors. Empty as the drive is, we should have a crowd round us."

"Taking you for the bride; and a very pretty one!" returned Mark, gallantly.

Caroline laughed; a little all-sorrows laugh of vanity. She laid her beautiful bosom of milk and marmalade—and for which the milliner would inevitably charge £10—on a side-table, and threw off her costly white lace mantle. The folds of her silk dress, its color the delicate bloom of the spring lilac, rustled as she went back to the window.

"Only think, Mark, we have been married nearly a year! It will be a year next month."

Mark stood with his face close to the window. He was looking at the trees in the Green Park, their leaves playing in the golden light of the setting sun. Caroline flung a few drops on her handkerchief from the miniature essence bottle dangling from her wrist, and raised it to her carnation cheeks. The day's excitement had brought to them that rich bloom too suspiciously beautiful.

"And to think upon what a year may bring forth!" exclaimed Mark in a fit of reflection. "What has this last done for us? You and I are man and wife; Dr. Davenal's dead; the Hallingham homes are broken up; I have quitted for ever that wretchedly worrying profession; and we are on the high road of the world's ladder!"

"And while we have gone up, poor Sara has gone down," remarked Caroline. "Instead of being the heiress of the rich Dr. Davenal, mistress (if you can put out old Aunt Bettina), of his handsome home, she is here in London, nobody! Mark, I should go mad—I declare to you I should become mad—were I to go down as Sara has."

"But you are not going down, thank goodness!" returned Mark. "I declare there's Barker! I thought he'd be."

Mr. Barker was dashing up the street in a cab, as fast as the horse's legs would go. He had been at the offices all day, doing duty for Mark. He saw them at the window, and gave them a nod as he leaped out. Mark looked at his watch and found it wanted yet some time to dinner. They sat down now: all three together, leaving the window to take care of itself. There was always so much to say when Barker was there; he talked so fast, and so unliringly, present doing and future prospects were so good; and Caroline was as much at home in it as they were. They had had a splendid day in the City, Barker said volubly, except for grumbling. A hundred or so groaning old disappointed fellows had been in, who wanted to embark in the Wheal Bang and make their fortunes, but there were no shares to be had for love or money, and they were fit to bite their fingers off. Altogether, nothing could be more smooth, more delightful than affairs, and Barker had received news from the mines that morning, promising loads upon loads of ore in a month or so's time. Mark rubbed his hands.

"I say, Barker, what do you say to a quiet little dinner at Blackwall to-morrow?" cried he. "I and Carine are thinking of driving down. Will you come?"

"Don't mind if I do," returned Barker.

"What time?"

"Well, not very late. The evenings are not as light as they were. Suppose we say—"

Before the hour had left Mark's lips, he was stopped by a commotion. A sound as of much talking and bumping of boxes in the hall below: of boxes that appeared to be coming into the house. Caroline went to the window and saw a cab drawn up to the door, a last trunk being finally taken off it, and three handboxes on a row on the pavement.

"Why, who can it be?" she exclaimed.

The question was soon set at rest. A lady in fashionable half-mourning entered the room and clasped Mark round the neck. Three young ladies entered after her and clasped Mark also, all three at once, two by the arms, one by the coat-tails. Mr. Barker's red whiskers stood out in wonder at the sight, and Caroline's violet eyes opened to their utmost width.

"We thought we'd take you by surprise, darling," the elder lady was saying. "The girls declared it would be delightful. I couldn't afford any change for them this year, Mark, out of my poor means, and we determined to pay you a visit for a few days. And so we have come, and I hope you can take us in."

"Yes, but don't smother me, all of you at once," was poor Mark's answer. "I am glad to see you, mother; and I am sure my wife—Caroline, you remember, my mother and my sisters."

It was certainly an imposing number to take a house by storm, and there was vexation in Mark's eye as he looked deprecatingly at his wife. But Caroline rose superior to the emergency. She came forward prettily and gracefully, and welcomed them all with a cordial smile. Mrs. Cray the elder could not take her eyes from her face: she thought she had never seen any one grown so lovely. She withdrew them at length and turned them on Mr. Barker.

But that gentleman scarcely needed an introduction. He was of that free and easy nature that makes itself at home without; and in an incredibly short time, before indeed the strangers had taken off their bonnets off, he was chattering to them as familiarly as though he had known them for years. They were rather pleasant girls, these sisters of Mark's: Fanny, Margaret and Nina: very accomplished, very useless, and bearing about them the tone of good society.

"You might have sent us word you were coming," persisted Mark, whose first feeling of annoyance at the interruption did not subside quickly. "You might have found us gone out and the house shut up. Everybody gets out of town for September."

"We took the risk," said Mrs. Cray.

"The fact is, Mark," interposed his sister Nina, a saucy girl, "we did not dare to give you notice lest you should write to stop us. We have wanted to come all the summer, you know we have, but you never replied to the hints we gave you, or offered us the least encouragement that we might come."

Mark laughed, rather a constrained laugh.

"I have been too busy to think of anything, Nina," said he. "But he was conscious it had been as she said.

Leaving Mark to welcome them now, we must turn for an instant to the house of Miss Davenal. Sara was at rest, for she had paid Mr. Alfred King. In her desperate need—it surely might be called such!—she wrote the facts of the case to Mr. Wheatley. Not telling him the details, not saying a word that might not have been disclosed to the whole body of police themselves, but simply stating to him that she had very urgent need of this two hundred pounds for her father's sake. She spoke of the money she was to receive from Mark Cray at the year's

end, and of Mark's declining to pay her until then; and if her pen was rather blower here, it meant no anguish to her, for she dimmed that Mark, rolling in luxury, behaved ill in this. She did not ask Mr. Wheatley to advance the money, but she did say that if any friend would do so, she would repay them with interest the very instant the money came to her from Mark. The result was that Mr. Wheatley sent her the money. But he was not a rich man, and he candidly told her he could not have done it but for the certainty there existed of its speedy return to him. Sara lost not a moment in seeking another and a final interview with Mr. Alfred King. The papers were given up to her, the receipt signed, all was done as specified by Dr. Davenal, and the affair and the danger to Edward were alike at an end.

Have you ever woken from a dreadful dream to the relief of reality? Not a dream of fright; I don't mean that; but one of those dreams portending some awful, feasible calamity for you or yours, whose very pain, if it did indeed overtake you, would be worse than death? Then you remember the bliss, the thankfulness rushing over your mind and brain, when you awoke to full consciousness, the grateful words bursting from your happy lips, "Oh, it was but a dream. Thank God, thank God!"

The moment of that redawning consciousness has stood out at the time as one of the most blessed ever vouchsafed in your checkered life. Just so was the relief to Sara Davenal. The horrible nightmare on her days was lifted; the fear which had been making her old before her time was over. Her countenance lost its look of weariness, and she seemed like a child again in her freedom from care.

Yet, the dreadful nightmare was over, and Sara was at rest. In her immunity from pain, in her renewed happiness, it almost seemed as if the world might still have charms for her. You can look at her as she stands in the drawing-room by Miss Davenal's side. It is the same evening, but the hour a little later, as the one spoken of above, when Mrs. Cray and her daughters made that irruption upon Mark. Sara is in evening dress, a black gauze, with a little white net quilting on the low body and sleeves. Her white cloak lies on the sofa, and she is drawing on some new lavender gloves. But look at her face! at its cheek's rich color! at the sweet smile on the lips, at the bright eye! Is it the anticipated evening's enjoyment that is calling these forth? No; no; the pleasant signs spring from a heart at rest; a heart that had long been aching, worn, tormented with a secret care.

It was very rare indeed that Miss Davenal went out, but she had accepted an invitation for that evening. She had a few friends in London, not new ones; of new ones she had made none: but old acquaintances of her earlier days. The friend she was going to this evening, Lady Reid, had been her schoolfellow at Hallingham; they had grown up together, and Bettina Davenal was her bridesmaid when she married young Lieutenant Reid, who had then his fortune to make. He made it out in India, and he came home a colonel and a K. C. B.; came home only to die: as is the case with too many who have spent their best days in the Indian empire. His widow lived at Brompton, and Miss Davenal and she liked nothing better than to spend an hour together and talk of the days when they were so young and hopeful. How different, how different to them was the world now? Could it be the same world? Many of you, my readers, have asked the very question.

Neal had gone to the livery stables to order round a carriage, for Miss Bettina had a horror of cabs and had not put her foot inside one since the evening of her arrival in London. She stood in her rich black silk and her cap of fine white lace called point d'Angleterre, gazing from the window and talking with Sara. They had had news from Bombay that afternoon from Edward. Great news! and perhaps Sara's cheeks owed some of their unusual color to it.

Captain Davenal was married. He had fallen in love with a pretty girl in India, or she had fallen in love with him, and they were married.

She was an only child, he wrote them word, and an heiress; her name Rose Reid, now Rose Davenal. Miss Davenal felt nearly sure it must be a niece of her old friend to whom she was that evening engaged. Lady Reid's late husband had a brother in the civil service at Bombay, reported to be a rich man, and it was probable this was his daughter.

"It is just like Edward," she said tartly to Sara, as she watched for the carriage. "To think that he should marry after a month or two's acquaintance! He can't have known her much longer."

"But he says she is so pretty, aunt; as lovely!" was Sara's pleading answer. "And if she is an heiress, I am very glad for Edward's sake."

"Ah," grimly returned Miss Bettina, having as usual heard all awry, "that's it, no doubt, the money's sake. I don't forget a good old proverb: 'Marry in haste and repent at leisure!'"

It was certainly an imposing number to take a house by storm, and there was vexation in Mark's eye as he looked deprecatingly at his wife.

He came to the rescue of his wife, and the scene was now as follows: the three young ladies were in the drawing-room, and the two old ones were in the kitchen, preparing the meal. The two old ones were in the kitchen, preparing the meal.

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availed, as many of the wild seeds are deleterious; for example, the yellow and the rough-pebbled walnuts, both which have been known to produce headache and vomiting; and the wholeness of many others is, to say the least, questionable. In some there appears to be a principle partaking of the nature of that which exists in the laburnum family, rendering that beautiful tree exceedingly poisonous. Many still trees have been made ill by eating the seeds, and two poor little sufferers, who ate the green pods as peas, expired in convulsions a few hours after. Several cases have been reported in medical journals of poisoning by the seeds and bark of the common laburnum.

A caution, too, should be given with reference to the leaves and fruit of the yew tree, which are very poisonous. The berries have a mawish, slightly sweet flavor, and their bright scarlet color and currant-like appearance make them very tempting to young children, several of whom have died from their effects.

Before closing this chapter, it should be said that in all cases of poisoning or suspected poison-ing medical aid ought to be immediately sought. Where it cannot be promptly procured, there should be no time lost in giving an emetic. When nothing else is at hand, the well-known dose—two or three teaspoonfuls of mixed mustard, stirred in half a pint of warm water—will generally answer the purpose. When the symptoms are stupor and a tendency to drowsiness, care should be taken to keep the patient awake by making him move about rapidly, and by pouring cold water on the head from a considerable height, and, if possible, he should be made sick.

As prevention is always better than cure, let the advice be given in all cases to avoid tasting wild plants and seeds of fruit; let children be cautioned never to play with them, as they will be almost sure to find the way to their mouths when a bright berry is the plaything. Adults should beware also that they give no ear to the ignorant prescriptions of quack doctors and village leeches, who frequently administer the most dangerous herbs as medicines, or recommend their use as sedatives. Well would it be if the education of young people in our country included the science of botany—at all events, sufficient acquaintance with it to enable them to keep out of harm's way, and to render a country walk interesting and instructive by the observation of our floral treasures.

### CH-NG P-NG;

#### Or, The Sphinx of Pekin.

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Chang Pang, beautiful as she was, was of a cold and cruel disposition, and cared no more for what her father said than the idle wind; but latterly, at which time she was about seventeen years of age, becoming harassed by continual solicitations, hit upon a scheme to relieve herself from her suitors. It was this: she proposed three conundrums, which I will tell you presently, and promised to marry the man who should succeed in guessing them, annexing, as a penalty, death to the rash man who should venture and fail in the attempt. To this artful device the emperor, in a weak moment, consented, and the horrible consequences of this Machiavellian scheme I am going to relate to you.

It may be expected, as was the case, that this scheme, which was publicly proclaimed, thinned the number of suitors rapidly, but not to so great an extent as Chang Pang had expected, such as her transcendent beauty and so great the pecuniary value of the prize to the successful guesser. The proclamation, of which I have a copy in Chinese in my pocket, given to me by a Chinese antiquarian, is as follows:—

#### By the Emperor. A Proclamation.

"Whereas, divers princes and other persons of suitable rank have demanded in marriage the hand of our well-beloved daughter and heiress, Chang Pang, but none of them has engaged the affections of our aforesaid daughter, and whereas it is hereby proclaimed and declared unto every person or persons who might, would, should, or could, at present, or in future, be desirous of demanding in marriage the aforesaid daughter, that in the event of such person or persons, satisfactorily answering three riddles, enigmata, conundrums, charades, or other diversities, a question to be propounded or otherwise laid before the aforesaid daughter, that person or persons shall forthwith receive, take or other wise become possessed of our aforesaid daughter, your empress, and be made, on her part, the General Empress of all the Chinese."

On the other hand, if such person or persons fail to solve or otherwise answer the aforesaid diverting questions, they shall be immediately hanged by the neck until they die or otherwise expire, and their goods, chattels, or other personal and real property, if there be any, be forfeited to our Imperial Exchequer. Given at our Court of Pekin,

VIVAT IMPERATOR."

About this period there arrived in Pekin a young man, to all outward appearance mean and poor, and by trade a photographic artist, an art known many centuries ago, and much practiced in the early period of the Chinese Empire, though since lost, and lately re-discovered. Several cases have been reported in medical journals of poisoning by the seeds and bark of the common laburnum.

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It may be expected, as was the case, that this scheme, which was publicly proclaimed, thinned the number of suitors rapidly, but not to so great an extent as Chang Pang had expected, such as her transcendent beauty and so great the pecuniary value of the prize to the successful guesser. The proclamation, of which I have a copy in Chinese in my pocket, given to me by a Chinese antiquarian, is as follows:—

—

CH-NG P-NG;

#### Or, The Sphinx of Pekin.

Many centuries ago, when all countries and

dynasties except China were yet young, there flourished in that wonderful empire a sovereign by race and temper a Tartar, who ruled his people with a rod of iron; his name was Ching Pang. Great and absolute monarch as he was, he was not, however, entirely supreme in his empire, for one, a female, ruled him; a lady, who, even more than her father, inherited all the attributes of the Tartar race, but of such a surpassing and miraculous beauty, that to see even her shadow was to become enamored. Of course she had many suitors at the time of the opening of my tale, when she had just turned sixteen; but you must know that from her earliest girlhood she had but suitors, and nearly every sovereign in the known world had made proposals of marriage, and laid his own particular net to catch the mighty prize who was being dangled in her nurse's arms. The first proposal made to the princess in person, whose name was Chang Pang, was at the age of fourteen, by a young emperor of India, an alliance which would have been honorable to both parties. It is said that on this occasion her heart was slightly touched with the blind god's dart, and the young emperor was apparently prospering in his suit, when chance—also, I believe, a blind goddess—threw in her way Confucius's "Treatise on Early Marriages," after perusing which she broke off the match, and the young emperor his neck, by casting himself in despair headlong from the summit of the palace walls. I have never heard whether this incident caused her any uneasiness, for she never lost her health, and she continued, as before, the reigning beauty of the Eastern world. But from that time forth she rejected all suitors, and had, as was believed, taken a vow of celibacy, to the great sorrow of her father, the emperor, and the intense disgust of the court ladies, who were jealous of her charms, and wished to see her married and, so to speak, "done for." Suitors still came in shreds, but she rejected them all, evinced a resolution not to change her maiden station, and, averse to husbands, resolved to husband her affection. Many thought her crazed, but not so her father, who was ever impressing upon her the importance to his own empire of her marriage with some great potentate.

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